



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants: M. INOUE, et al

Serial No.: 09/258,302

Filed: February 26, 1999

For: POINT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Group: 3622

Examiner: D. Lastra

501.36884X00

Patricia Lewis
#12/req for
reconsideration
+ w/o action
4-5-03

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GROUP 3600

RESPONSE

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

March 31, 2003

Sir:

In response to the Office Action dated December 31, 2002 and as a result of the Interview held March 27, 2003.

The present application has pending claims 21-37.

Applicant's Attorney the undersigned wishes to thank Primary Examiner Myhre and Examiner Lastra for the courtesy extended during the Interview.

During the interview the rejection of claims 21-37 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Takaragi (U.S. Patent No. 4,885,788) in view of Mori (U.S. Patent No. 5,659,166) was discussed. As indicated during the Interview this rejection is traversed. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

It is again submitted that the features of the present invention are not taught or suggested by any of the references of record whether taken individually or in

combination with each other. Particularly, none of the references of record teach or suggest a point management system, an IC card for use in a point management system, a method of issuing point data to an IC and a method of transmitting point data to an IC card.

As discussed during the interview the point management system of the present invention includes a point system management apparatus for registering information of a store which participates in a point system and for providing the store with a register store number and an encryption key, both of which are peculiar to the store, and an IC card. The IC card includes a memory having a plurality of point storage areas each storing point data which is assigned corresponding to a customer's use and a point management application for processing data encrypted by the encryption key and including point data and for managing access to each of the point storage areas by the register store number. The point management system also provides a reading and writing apparatus which reads and writes the IC card by the using the register store number and the encryption key.

The above described features of the present invention now more clearly recited in new claims 21-37 are not taught or suggested by Takaragi or Mori whether taken individually or in combination with each other as suggested by the Examiner.

The above noted features of the present invention are not taught or suggested by Takaragi.

Takaragi merely discloses an IC card with transactions areas which are different depending upon the different encipher and decipher keys. Thus, in Takaragi the transaction areas do not correspond to the registered stores as in the

present invention. Further, the transaction areas taught by Takaragi do not store point data corresponding to the registered store nor are they accessed using the register store number as in the present invention.

In Takaragi a cipher key is used to distinguish one area from another. Such use of a cipher key to distinguish the transaction areas is cumbersome and requires extended time consuming processing to access each and every transaction area. The present invention overcomes these disadvantages by simply corresponding the storages areas to the register store numbers. Such is not taught or suggested by Takaragi.

Mori merely discloses a card processor which continuously executes and controls various related functions such as electronic money, credit and points. However, Mori fails to teach or suggest that a plurality of storage areas are provided in the memory of the storage device so as to correspond to each of the registered stores as in the present invention. Further, Mori does not teach or suggest a point management application for processing data encrypted by an encryption key and for managing access to each of the point storage areas by the register store number as in the present invention.

The Examiner alleges that it would be inherent for Takaragi using the teachings of Mori to designate a transaction area when the card is placed in a terminal being operated by a particular store. However, the Examiner has not and was unable to point to a shred of evidence in either Takaragi or Mori supporting such alleged inherent operation. The Examiner is respectfully requested to supply a

reference wherein such an alleged teaching is clearly evident. The Examiner's attempted use of Mori in this manner is not persuasive.

Therefore, combining the teachings of Takaragi and Mori still fails to teach or suggest the features of the present invention as recited in the claims.


Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the above noted rejection of claims 21-37 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Takaragi in view of Mori is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that claims 21-37 are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of claims 21-37 is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, the applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (501.36884X00).

Respectfully submitted,

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